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Viewing cable 06MANAGUA1209, UPBEAT PRESIDENT BOLANOS HOPES SUCCESSOR BUILDS ON

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06MANAGUA1209**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06MANAGUA1209	2006-06-05 22:54	2011-08-30 01:44	SECRET	Embassy Managua

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758467.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758468.aspx>
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<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2758764.aspx>
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<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2757239.aspx>
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3991/dra-yadira-centeno-desmiente-cable-diplomatico-eeuu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3968/pellas-pronostico-a-eeuu-victoria-de-ortega-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC

S E C R E T MANAGUA 001209

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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CEN TPIERCE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/05/2026
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [NU](#)
SUBJECT: UPBEAT PRESIDENT BOLANOS HOPES SUCCESSOR BUILDS ON
HIS LEGACY

REF: MANAGUA 1180

Classified By: Ambassador Paul A. Trivelli. Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: President Bolanos recently confided to Ambassador his desire for his successor, ideally Liberal dissident Eduardo Montealegre, to build on his legacy. He justified his firing of a number of government employees for corruption, downplaying the fact that they had recently abandoned his Alliance for the Republic (APRE) party to join Arnoldo Aleman's Liberal Constitutional Party (PLC). According to a recent private sector-contracted Cid-Gallup poll, Daniel Ortega leads with 26%, followed by Liberal dissident Eduardo Montealegre at 22%, Sandinista dissident Herty Lewites 16%, and PLC candidate Jose Rizo trailing at 12%. The poll suggests that in a runoff between Montealegre and Ortega, Montealegre will win. The region's capital appears to realize that Montealegre is the most viable candidate to beat Ortega, but this sentiment could shift if Rizo's numbers rise and/or support for Montealegre wanes. At present, the PLC appears increasingly desperate for funds, possibly prompting the party to spread rumors that Washington will soon replace the U.S. Ambassador. END SUMMARY

12. (C) On June 2, Ambassador, DCM, and polcouns lunched at the Presidency with an upbeat President Bolanos, along with Foreign Minister Caldera, adviser Frank Arana, and former Minister of Transport Pedro Solorzano. Bolanos justified his recent firing of a number of government employees, including former Minister of Family Ivania Toruno and Telcor director Martha Lugo, while downplaying the fact that they had recently abandoned his Alliance for the Republic (APRE) party to join Arnoldo Aleman's Liberal Constitutional Party (PLC). Bolanos remarked that the removal of these and other officials supporting the PLC would cut off their "access" to government funds. While Bolanos justified his firing of these turncoat officials for reasons of corruption, Solorzano went to great lengths to dispel the charges of corruption and mismanagement during his tenure as Transport Minister, terming them false and politically motivated (Reftel).

13. (SBU) NOTE/COMMENT: Bolanos' decision to fire these officials has drawn considerable criticism from competing presidential candidates, especially Jose Rizo and Herty Lewites, the latter suggesting that all candidates should resign from the government. Nicaragua electoral law does not/not require that candidates resign from office, unless they are running for president or vice president. END NOTE/COMMENT.

POLL CONVINCES FINANCIERS THAT MONTEALEGRE, NOT RIZO, CAN

BEAT ORTEGA

14. (C) Confiding to Ambassador the desire for his successor to build on his legacy, Bolanos reiterated his support for Eduardo Montealegre. Bolanos' senior political adviser Frank Arana shared details of the recent private sector-contracted Cid-Gallup poll (conducted during the third week in May with 1,162 respondents, 3% margin of error). He recounted how 22 financiers from the region, including Carlos Pellas envoys, had met on June 1 to hear the results of the poll. Daniel Ortega leads with 26%, followed by Liberal dissident Eduardo Montealegre at 22%, Sandinista dissident Herty Lewites 16%, and PLC candidate Jose Rizo 12%. In the poll, 12% did not reveal their preference; 11% claimed they will not vote. However, support for the legislative slates of candidates favored Ortega and Rizo: 30% will vote for FSLN; 22% for PLC; 11% for Montealegre's ALN; and 8% for Lewites' MRS. (NOTE: the survey was conducted before May 31 when parties registered their National Assembly and Parlacen lists. END NOTE.)

15. (C) According to Arana, the poll also suggests that no candidate will win on the first round, and in the likely event the two frontrunners are Montealegre and Ortega, Montealegre will win with over double the votes of Ortega's. He also shared that in a scenario pitting Ortega against Rizo in a runoff, Rizo could win by 2%. However, given the likelihood that the FSLN could easily steal 2% to 5% of the vote, plus the 3% margin of error, Ortega could beat Rizo, warned Arana.

PLC APPROACHES TAIWAN

16. (S) Bolanos alerted Ambassador that Aleman supporters have approached the Taiwanese government to seek its financial backing for PLC candidate Rizo. According to Bolanos and his advisers, PLC campaign manager Gilberto Wong, whose brother was until recently Nicaragua's ambassador to Taipei, is leading this effort and has requested USD 7 million for Rizo's campaign. He warned that Taiwanese support for the PLC would be disastrous. Bolanos remarked that he recently discussed with his Taiwanese counterpart the possibility of Taiwanese support for Liberal dissident Eduardo Montealegre. According to Bolanos, the Taiwanese president was receptive to the idea. (NOTE: President Bolanos plans on visiting Taiwan o/a June 9, along with chief of staff Leonardo Somarriba, and they intend to pursue this possibility further at that time. END NOTE.)

POLTICS MAKES FOR STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

17. (C) A bemused Bolanos related the ironies of Nicaraguan politics, citing the fact that his logical enemies, the Sandinistas (FSLN), have become "strange friends," supporting him on a number of laws, including the Framework Law (that allowed him to continue governing) and legislation required for CAFTA implementation. Bolanos was optimistic that the FSLN will also support him on the destruction of 651 MANPADS. He lamented that the PLC, which normally would be an ideological ally of his government, has refused to support important legislation because he refused to support amnesty for their leader Arnoldo Aleman.

WHAT'S WITH MORALES?

18. (C) Speculation arose regarding Ortega VP candidate/Liberal dissident lawmaker Jaime Morales' decision to run on the FSLN ticket. Bolanos ventured that Morales had concluded that even if the PLC won the election, Morales would still enjoy Ortega's protection. And, if Ortega lost to Montealegre, Morales would have a National Assembly seat (second-place presidential and vice-presidential candidates

are accorded Assembly seats). Bolanos also noted that Jaime Morales' brother, millionaire Rene Morales, firmly backs Montealegre. (NOTE: Over the weekend, glossy, blue and yellow posters featuring Morales appeared in Managua. These posters underscore the FSLN's "reconciliation" ticket as one that will bring peace and prosperity to Nicaraguans. In Managua, FSLN propaganda outnumbers other party campaign materials by at least ten to one. END NOTE.)

COMMENT

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19. (S) Now that the bulk of the region's capital, including Carlos Pellas, appears to realize that Montealegre is the most viable candidate to beat Ortega and lead Nicaragua in the right direction, we can expect these financiers will direct the bulk of their funding to his campaign. The next series of polls will be crucial, however. If Rizo's numbers do not rise, support for him will likely migrate to Montealegre, while, if Rizo gains ground and Montealegre's support wanes or stagnates, much of the region's private sector may reconsider. In any event, some financiers, like Pellas, will probably hedge their bets by contributing more modest sums to Ortega and Rizo. We also hear that now that the private sector appears less willing to support the PLC, and the party no longer enjoys access to Nicaraguan government coffers, the PLC is desperate for funds. Possibly, this desperation has prompted PLC-owned media and outlets sympathetic to its cause, such as the Arnoldista rag "La Trinchera," to spread the rumor that Washington will soon replace the U.S. Ambassador.

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